

Appl. No. 09/683,370
Amdt. dated July 20, 2005
Reply to Office Action of March 22, 2005

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Please amend claims 1, 6 and 11 as follows:

1. (currently amended) A method of collecting and storing evaluation information relating to the quality of performance of a process, comprising the steps of:
 - examining the process to identify individual process steps required by the process;
 - collecting evaluation information related to one or more process steps and of the overall process, the evaluation information providing insight into quality of performance of one or more process steps or of the overall process, the evaluation information including information comparing specified aspects of instances of performance of a process step or of the overall process against predetermined standards for performance;
 - processing the evaluation information to form a collection of evaluation information documents, each one or more evaluation information document documents including evaluation information relating to quality of performance of one or more process steps or of the overall process presenting evaluation information showing how well one or more process steps or of the overall process meets has been performed, as compared against the predetermined standards has been performed;
 - storing the evaluation information documents in electronically retrievable format;
 - creating a description of each process step;
 - organizing the process step descriptions into a process description comprising a sequence of process step descriptions;
 - adding to the process description links to appropriate evaluation information documents, each link retrieving an evaluation information document associated with the link upon activation of the link; and

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storing the process description in electronically retrievable format.

2. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the step of processing the evaluation information is followed by a step of organizing the evaluation information documents into levels, each evaluation document being assigned a level based on a level of a process or process step to which an evaluation document relates.

3. (original) The method of claim 2 wherein the step of organizing the evaluation information documents includes establishing links between related evaluation information documents.

4. (original) The method of claim 3 wherein the step of adding to the process description links to evaluation information documents includes establishing a plurality of levels of links, with each level of link retrieving a particular level of evaluation information document.

5. (original) The method of claim 4 wherein the step of adding to the process description links to evaluation information documents is followed by a step of adding to the process description links to resources useful for performing the process.

6. (currently amended) A method of retrieving and examining evaluation information relating to performance of a process, comprising the steps of:

retrieving a process description comprising a sequence of process step descriptions, the process description including a plurality of links to evaluation information documents, each document presenting evaluation information relating to performance of a process step or of the overall process, the evaluation information providing insight into quality of performance of one or more process steps or of the overall process, the evaluation information including information comparing specified aspects of instances of performance of a process step or of the overall process against predetermined standards for performance;

upon activation of a link to an evaluation information document, retrieving the evaluation information document associated with the link; and

displaying the evaluation information document.

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7. (original) The method of claim 6 wherein the step of retrieving the evaluation information document includes retrieving one or more additional evaluation information documents related to the evaluation information document retrieved upon activation of the link.

8. (original) The method of claim 7 wherein the step of displaying the evaluation information document is followed by a step of displaying one of the one or more additional evaluation information documents upon selection by a user.

9. (original) The method of claim 8 wherein the step of retrieving the process description is preceded by displaying a list of available process descriptions and receiving a user selection from the list and wherein the step of retrieving the process description comprises retrieving the process description selected from the list.

10. (original) The method of claim 9 wherein the step of displaying the list of available process descriptions is preceded by receiving search terms from a user and wherein the list of available process descriptions is a list of process descriptions conforming to the search terms.

11. (currently amended) A system for creation and storage of process descriptions and collection and retrieval of evaluation information, comprising:

a process description library for storing a plurality of process descriptions in electronically retrievable format;

an evaluation information database for storing a plurality of evaluation information documents stored in electronically retrievable format, each document presenting evaluation information relating to performance of a process step or of the overall process, the evaluation information providing insight into quality of performance of one or more process steps or of the overall process, the evaluation information including information comparing specified aspects of instances of performance of a process step or of the overall process against predetermined standards for performance; and

a process description manager operative to create the process descriptions, the process description manager being operative to include in one or more of the process descriptions one or more links to evaluation information documents, each link causing retrieval of an associated

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evaluation information document upon activation of the link, the process description manager being operative to store each process description in the process description library upon creation of the process description.

12. (original) The system of claim 11 further comprising an evaluation information manager operative to retrieve and display selected evaluation information documents.

13. (original) The system of claim 12 wherein activation of a link invokes the evaluation information manager and selects for display the associated evaluation information document.

14. (original) The system of claim 13 wherein the evaluation information manager is operative to receive collected evaluation information and process the collected evaluation information to form the evaluation information documents.

15. (original) The system of claim 14 wherein each process description comprises a plurality of process step descriptions arranged in a sequence.

16. (original) The system of claim 15 wherein the process description manager is operative to assign a level to each of the process descriptions and process step descriptions indicating a level in a hierarchy of process descriptions and process step descriptions stored in the process description library.

17. (original) The system of claim 16 wherein each of the evaluation information documents is assigned a level in a hierarchy of levels and wherein at least some of the levels in the hierarchy of evaluation information documents correspond to equivalent levels in the hierarchy of process and process step descriptions.

18. (original) The system of claim 17 wherein one or more of the links in the process description is associated with a process step description.

19. (original) The system of claim 18 wherein each link associated with one or more of the process step descriptions is operative to retrieve an evaluation information document

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having a level equivalent to the level of the process step description with which the link is associated.